

Add dash with a splash of bitters

Confused by culinary conundrums? **Jenny Garing** of Ground Essentials, Lyttelton, will solve them for you.

Q. Can Angostura bitters be used in cooking? I keep a bottle handy for an occasional pink gin, but would welcome other uses.

A. Angostura bitters was used originally as a fever cure and contains quinine, tropical spices and citrus. It can be used with different foods but use judiciously. Add to a sugar syrup and dress a fruit salad especially if it includes oranges.

Use – a few drops only though – in a fricassee, creamy pasta sauces,

or sauces for chicken, fish or pork. Liven up whipped cream by adding a few drops of bitters and a teaspoon of icing sugar.

Use in cocktails. Put a small sugar cube in a champagne glass, add a few splashes of Angostura bitters and top it with champagne. As the champagne dissolves the sugar cube, add a thin curled slice of lemon peel.

Q Do I need to store eggs in the refrigerator during summer, or can they still be kept in the pantry? How long will egg whites or yolks last in the fridge?

A. Both the fridge and the pantry are fine, but eggs last longer in the

fridge. Generally speaking, eggs will stay fresh for about a week in your pantry, as long as the temperature doesn't go over about 20C. s.

In the fridge they will last for up to three or four weeks. The main disadvantage, of course, is that for most dishes, you then need to take the eggs out of the fridge and let them warm to room temperature. This is particularly important when you are making meringues or custard-type dishes.

To store hard-boiled eggs, always refrigerate them, but it pays to peel them first as hard-boiled eggs left in the shells develop an unappetising blueish tinge around the yolk. Wrap the peeled eggs in

cling film and only store them for a couple of days at most.

If you have egg yolks left over, put them in the fridge in a small bowl covered in cold water to prevent the outer membrane from hardening and cracking.

Whole eggs or beaten eggs can be stored in an air-tight container in the fridge for a few days. Egg whites can be frozen but once defrosted they need to be used immediately.

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■ Epicurious is published monthly. Email your queries to jenny@ground.co.nz

